

REMARKS

Claims 1-3, 5, 13-14, 16-17, and 28-38 are pending in the application after this amendment. The addition, amendment, and/or withdrawal of claims is not to be considered in any way an indication of applicants' position on the merits of the withdrawn claims. In the following sections of the Amendment the restriction requirement and rejections set forth by the Examiner in the July 2, 2003 Office action are addressed. The restriction requirement and rejections are respectfully traversed, and detailed arguments are set forth below. Reconsideration of the claims is requested in view of the foregoing amendments and the following remarks.

For the purpose of obtaining an early allowance, applicants have elected to withdraw claims. This election was made with traverse. In the July 2, 2003 Office action the Examiner once again states that the election was made without traverse. Applicants understand that the Examiner may disagree with the grounds for traverse, but applicants respectfully submit that arguments were presented and that the election was made with traverse. Incorporated herein (without repetition) are the specific recitation of the facts and the specific arguments found in previous papers.

Turning next to claim rejections, the Examiner rejected the claims as anticipated by or obvious over U.S. Patent No. 5,997,360 to Gen-Kuong et al. (the "Gen-Kuong reference").

The Gen-Kuong reference is directed to an aircraft equipment configuration "identification interface" in which an instrumentation interface 10 has a key engagement member 16 that electrically engages an electrically conductive mechanical key 12 associated with an aircraft. The key engagement member 16 includes a plurality of electrically conductive pins 36a-f, each pin being deflectable because it includes a spring 42. The Gen-Kuong key engagement member 16 is made up of a plurality of pins, not a single pin. Based on the engagement (read as a logical low (0)) and nonengagement (read as a logical high (1)) of each of the pins 36a-f when the key engagement member 16 engages the mechanical key 12, the aircraft equipment configuration is able to be identified or determined. It needs to be emphasized here that

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Gen-Kuong is really discussing an identification interface, not a probe. There are two embodiments of the pins. The first is shown in FIGS. 4-6 and the second is shown in FIG. 8.

In the first embodiment shown in FIGS. 4-6, each pin 36a-f is provided with a tip portion 38 and a shaft portion 40 that are flexibly connected by a spring 42. An electrical contact surface 44 is formed where the mechanical key comes into contact with the tip portions 38 of each pin 36a-f. The Gen-Kuong shaft portion 40 is not the device to be probed. The first end of the Gen-Kuong flexible coil is not for coupling with a device to be probed, but instead is for coupling with the tip portion 38. The Gen-Kuong spring 42 does not have the claim element of being "substantially hollow" (the tip portion 38 completely fills the hollow end of the spring 42). The Gen-Kuong spring 42 does not have the claim element of being suitable "to receive a device to be probed therein" because the tip portion 38 would prevent the spring 42 from receiving any device to be probed.

In the second embodiment shown in FIG. 8, the pin only includes a shaft portion 56 and a spring portion 58. The Gen-Kuong reference specifically sets forth that the spring portion 58 is provided with an engagement end 60 that is formed to electrically engage the mechanical key 12. Gen-Kuong further teaches that when the pin 36 is engaged with the mechanical key 12 the electrical contact surface 44 is formed at the engagement end 60 of the spring portion 58. (Column 8, line 62 - Column 9, line 4.) Although the spring portion 58 "engages" the mechanical key 12, there is no teaching or suggestion that the spring portion 58 "couples" with the mechanical key 12. Further, there is no teaching that the contact surface 44 will be formed by insertion of the mechanical key 12 into any of the pins.

Claim 1, as amended, is directed to an electrical test probe tip that has a first end of a flexible coil that is for coupling with a device to be probed, the flexible coil at least partially extending beyond the probing head. First, the Gen-Kuong reference does not teach or suggest teach or suggest the claimed electrical test probe tip that has a first end of a flexible coil that is for coupling with a device to be probed. The Gen-

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Kuong pins 36a-f shown in FIGS. 4-6 do not have a flexible coil that is for coupling with a device to be probed because the tip portion 38 completely fills the hollow end of the spring 42. The Gen-Kuong pin 36 shown in FIG. 8 arguably does "couple" with a device to be probed but only "engages" with the mechanical key 12. Second, the Gen-Kuong reference does not teach or suggest teach or suggest the flexible coil at least partially extending beyond the probing head. The Gen-Kuong springs 42 (and by implication, spring portion 58) do not extend beyond the key engagement member 16. Further, because the key engagement member 16 is within the instrumentation interface 10, the Gen-Kuong springs 42 (and by implication, spring portion 58) do not extend beyond the instrumentation interface 10. As shown in FIGS. 4 and 10-14, the flexible coil 10 of the present invention at least partially extends beyond the probing head 13. Third, the Gen-Kuong springs are associated with an identification interface, not a probing head. Claim 1 is not taught or suggested by the references alone or in combination and should therefore be allowable. Claims 2-3, 5, and 28-31 (as well as the withdrawn claims 4 and 6-12) are dependent on claim 1 and are allowable for the same reasons as well as because limitations therein are not taught or suggested by the known references.

Claim 13, as amended, is directed to multipurpose electrical test probe tip that has a first end of a flexible member for securely flexibly coupling with a component to be probed so as to allow movement of the probing head. First, the Gen-Kuong reference does not teach or suggest teach or suggest the claimed flexible member for securely flexibly coupling with a component to be probed. The Gen-Kuong pins 36a-f shown in FIGS. 4-6 do not have a flexible member that is for coupling with a device to be probed because the tip portion 38 completely fills the hollow end of the spring 42. The Gen-Kuong pin 36 shown in FIG. 8 arguably does "couple" with a device to be probed but only "engages" with the mechanical key 12. Second, the Gen-Kuong reference does not teach or suggest teach or suggest that the coupling allows movement of the probing head. In fact, the entire instrumentation interface 10 appears to be held to the interface connector 14 without any movement being allowed therebetween. Third, the Gen-Kuong springs are associated with an identification

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interface, not a probing head. Claim 13 is not taught or suggested by the references alone or in combination and should therefore be allowable. Claims 14, 16-17, and 32-34 (as well as withdrawn claims 15 and 18-23) are dependent on claim 13 and are allowable for the same reasons as well as because limitations therein are not taught or suggested by the known references.

New dependent claims 35 and 36 include subject matter taught and suggested in the original application and, therefore, would not constitute new matter. However, the subject matter of these claims is similar to the claims currently withdrawn. For the purpose of prosecution simplicity and in anticipation of the Examiner's restriction requirement, applicants will elect to withdraw these new claims. This election was made with traverse. Incorporated herein (without repetition) are the specific recitation of the facts and the specific arguments found in previous papers.

New independent claims 37 and 38 should be allowable for the same reasons as were discussed for claims 1 and 13.

In view of the above, it is submitted that both the currently pending claims as well as the withdrawn claims are patentable over the known references alone or in combination. Reconsideration of the claims is respectfully requested in view of the above amendments and remarks, and early notice of allowance thereof is earnestly solicited.

CONTINUITY DATA AND FILING RECEIPT

It appears that the continuity data for the present invention is still incorrect. Applicants enclose herewith a copy of the Preliminary Amendment and Request for Correction of Filing Receipt filed on November 24, 2002. A copy of the date stamped return receipt postcard is attached to the copy. According to the PAIR system, the Response to the Election Requirement that accompanied the Preliminary Amendment and Request for Correction of Filing Receipt was received and entered. Applicants respectfully request (1) correction of the continuity data and (2) a corrected filing receipt.

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FEE CONFIRMATION

Applicants have reviewed the fees from the previous submissions to the patent office. In the June 20, 2003 submission, several claims were added to the application. Applicants attorney was charged \$54 on her deposit account, but is not sure how this figure was obtained (please note that applicants are a large entity). Applicants respectfully request (1) confirmation that the correct amount was paid for claims pending after the June 20, 2003 submission and (2) an accounting of the fees for additional claims. Please charge Deposit Account No. 50-2115 for any additional fees which may be required.

Respectfully submitted,



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Annotated Sheet Showing Changes

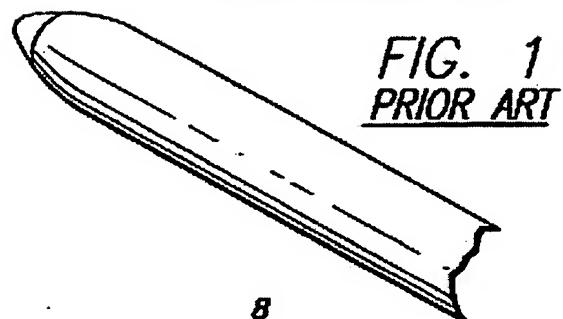


FIG. 1
PRIOR ART

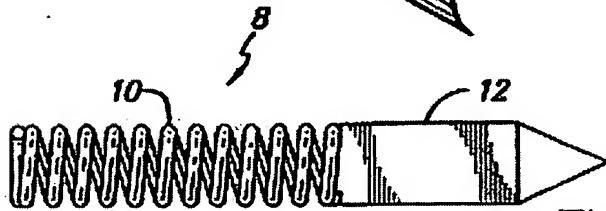


FIG. 2

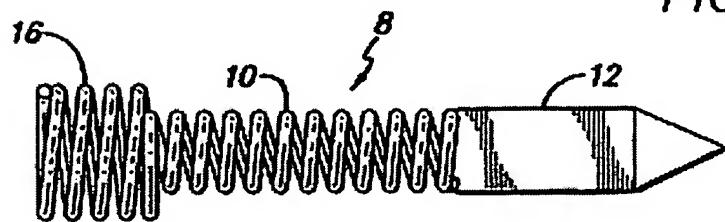


FIG. 3

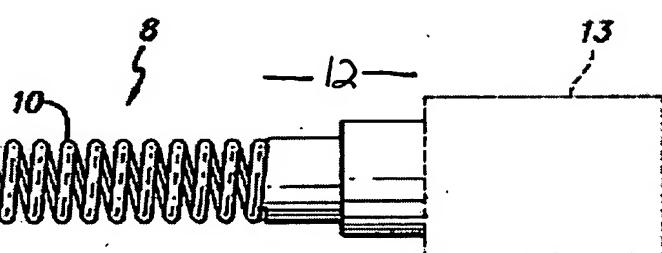


FIG. 4

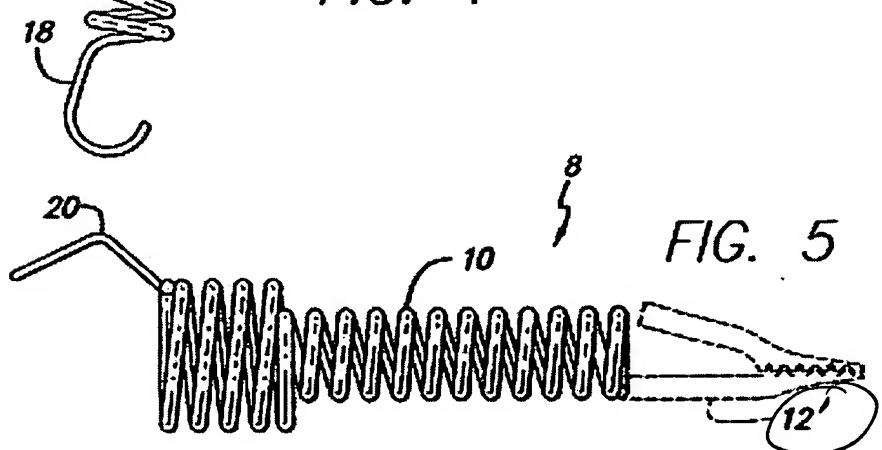


FIG. 5



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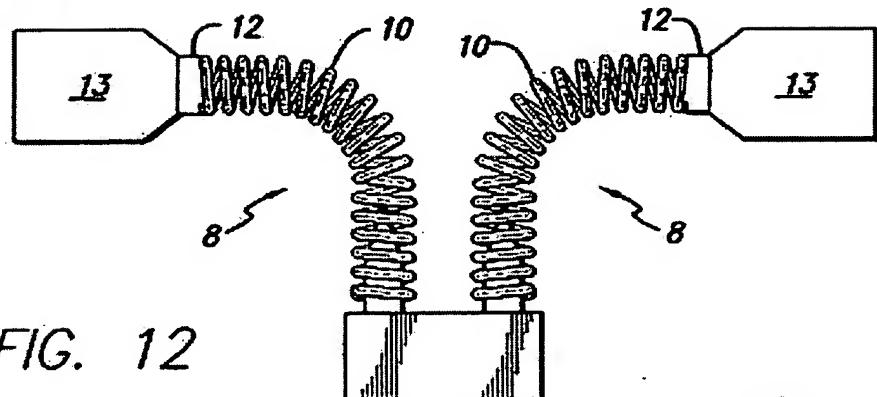


FIG. 12

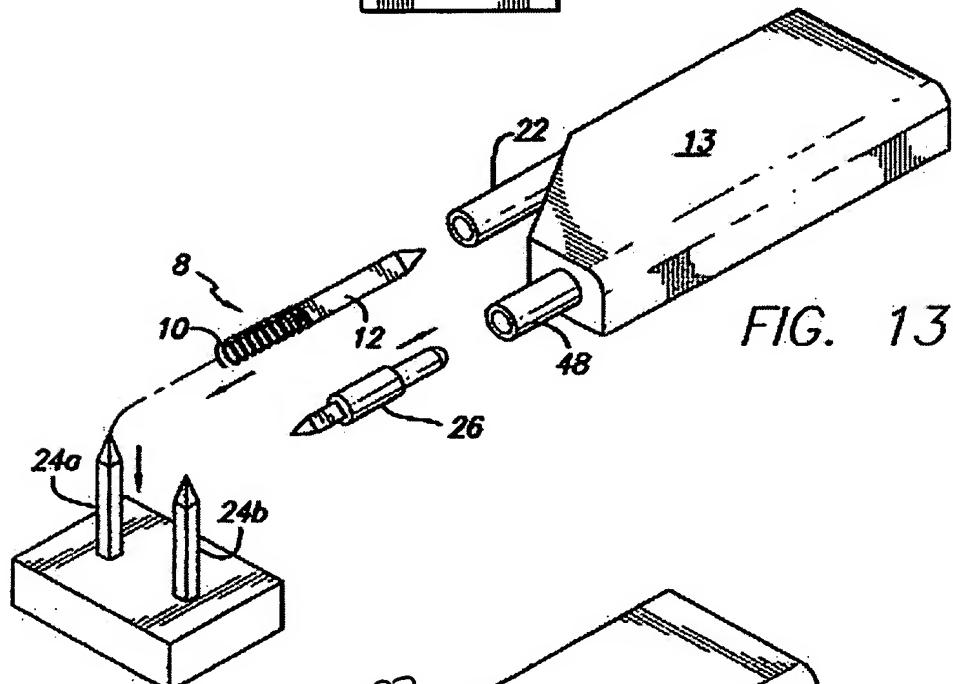


FIG. 13

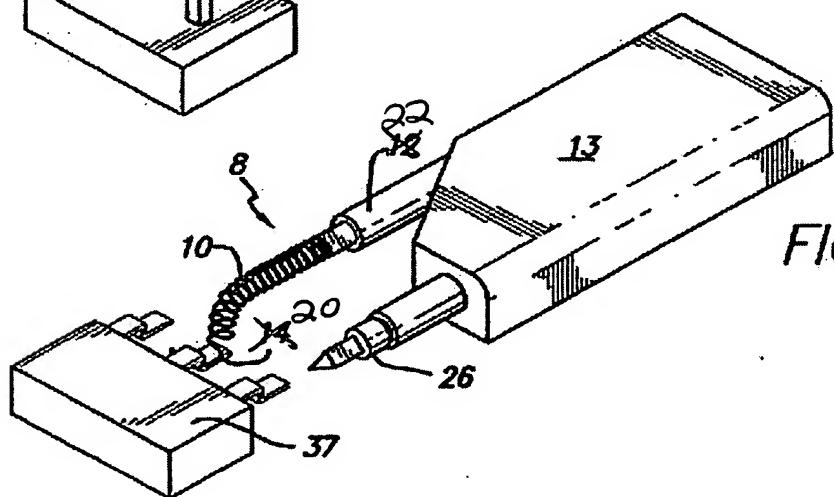


FIG. 14